

102 House Republicans seek

WASHINGTON (AP) - Breaking ranks on a key item in the "Contract With America," nearly half the Republicans in the House called Tuesday for scaling back tax breaks intended for wealthier families. "I don't think that's out of the question," Speaker Newt Gingrich conceded.

The White House and congressional Democrats instantly renewed their attacks on Republicans as benefactors of the rich.

"I can certainly understand their

unease with . . . regressive, trickle-down tax policy," taunted House Democratic leader Dick Gephardt of Missouri, who noted that Republicans also favor cuts in school lunch and other nutrition programs.

With the GOP tax-cut measure expected on the House floor next week, 102 Republican lawmakers cast their request to limit a \$500-per-child tax credit as an effort to plow more money into deficit reduction. Even so, their proposal reflected a

broader debate among majority Republicans in Congress - and White House hopefuls - of the prominence that tax cuts should receive in the coming months.

As approved last week in the House Ways and Means Committee, the GOP tax bill would permit families earning up to \$200,000 a year the full, \$500-per-child tax credit promised in the "Contract With America." A letter from 102 of the 230 House Republicans calls for a vote on lowering the cap to \$95,000.

THE FREDERICK POST, FREDERICK, MD., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 1995 A-3

World

to cut back tax credit

"Passage of this amendment would still cover 85 percent of the families in America," the group wrote. However, they wrote that it would also mean "an additional \$12 billion to \$14 billion in savings for deficit reduction."

The Republicans intend to bring the tax-cut measure to the floor at the same time as spending cuts to pay for it.

Republican leaders have made many compromises in the past 75 days as they maneuvered their

ambitious agenda toward passage. House approval of the balanced-budget amendment came only after the leadership bowed to GOP moderates and dropped a provision requiring a two-thirds vote to raise taxes.

Even so, the letter stands out as the most striking example of lawmakers using public pressure to force a key change in the "Contract With America."

The letter was sent to Rep. Gerald

Solomon, R-N.Y., chairman of the Rules Committee that will set the rules for debate on the measure. Its leading sponsors were Rep. Greg Ganske, a first-term from Iowa, and Rep. Pat Roberts, R-Kansas, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee.

Both men met Monday night with Mr. Gingrich and Majority Leader Dick Armey of Texas, and subsequently scrapped plans for a morning news conference. Instead, they issued a written statement.